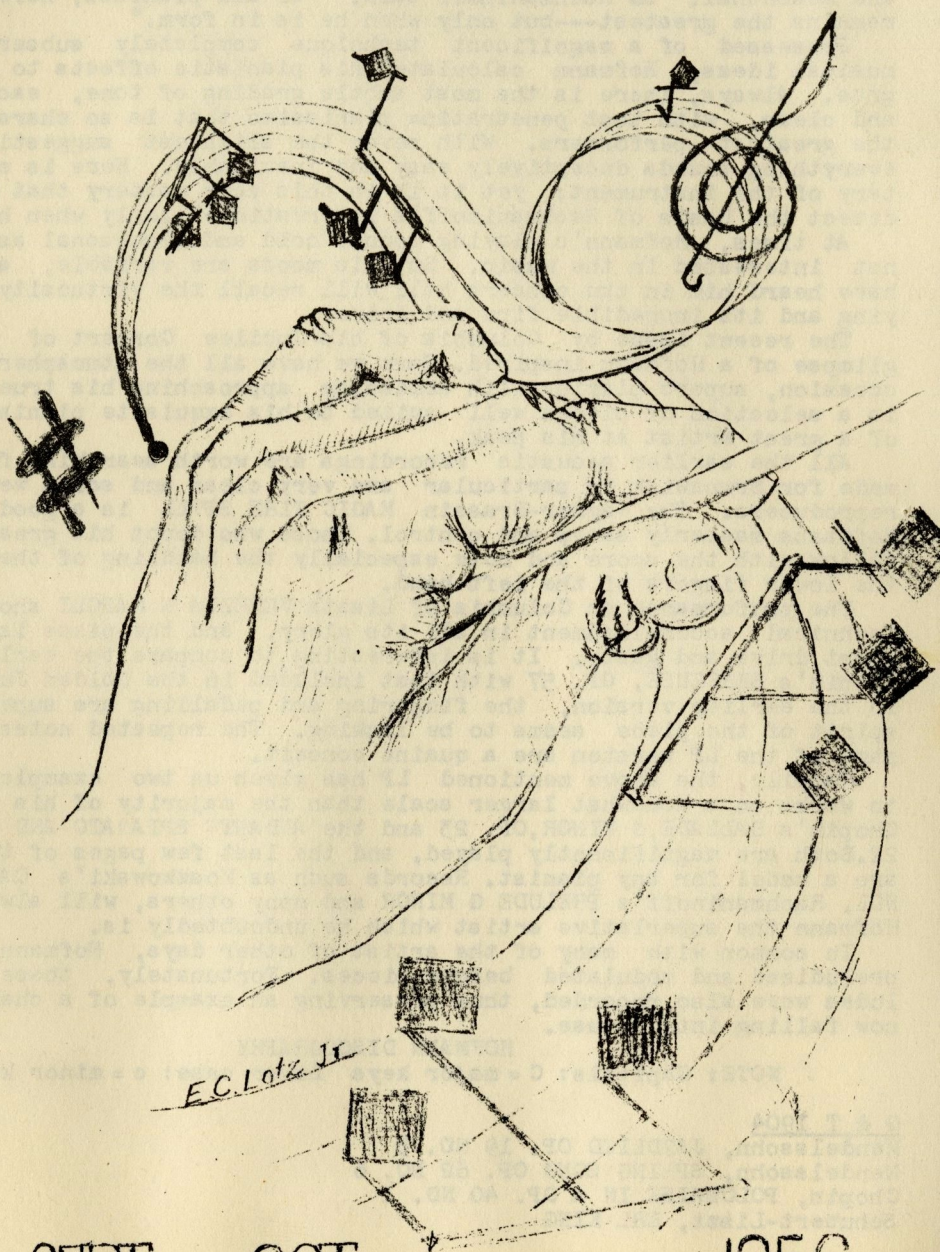


PHOTOGRAPHY

THE MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO THE RECORD
COLLECTOR & MUSIC ENTHUSIAST ©



SEPT. ~ OCT.

1956

Joseph Hofmann had the good fortune to study with Anton Rubinstein for two years, and his interpretations, particularly of the romantic composers, are authoritative and a model for all performers.

He is, above all, a pianist for pianists. He has earned the admiration and respect of such artists as Rachmaninoff, Horowitz, Busoni, Godowsky and Rosenthal. As Rachmaninoff said, "Of all pianists, Hofmann probably remains the greatest---but only when he is in form."

Possessed of a magnificent technique completely subservient to his musical ideas, Hofmann calculated his pianistic effects to the last degree. Always, there is the most subtle grading of tone, each note sharp and clear, with that penetrating pianissimo that is so characteristic of the greatest performers. With never the slightest suggestion of hurry, everything sounds deceptively easy and inevitable. Here is complete mastery of the instrument; yet it is in this very mastery that we sometimes detect the basis of Rachmaninoff's reservation: "...only when he is in form

At times, Hofmann's playing sounds cold and impersonal as if he were not interested in the music. But his moods are variable, and those who have heard him in the concert hall will recall the virtuosity of his playing and its incredible fire and drive.

The recent issue by Columbia of his Jubilee Concert of 1937 gives a glimpse of a Hofmann inspired. Here we have all the atmosphere of a great occasion, superb playing with something approaching his true tone. This is a selection of pieces well suited to his exquisite pianism and worthy of a great artist at his peak.

All the earlier acoustic recordings are worth searching for and those made for Brunswick in particular are very clear and sound well on modern reproducers. The Wagner-Brassin MAGIC FIRE SPELL is a good example of Hofmann's masterly sweep and control. Those who doubt his greatness should follow with the score and note especially the handling of the melody with the lower fingers of the left hand.

The performance on Columbia of Liszt's VENEZIA E NAPOLI shows Hofmann's technical accomplishment in all its glory, and the piece is played with great drive and gusto. It is interesting to compare the early version of Chopin's BERCEUSE, OP. 57 with that included in the Golden Jubilee album. In the earlier version, the fingering and pedalling are superb, but the spirit of the piece seems to be lacking. The repeated notes on the last page of the LP version are a quaint conceit.

Happily, the above mentioned LP has given us two examples of Hofmann in works on a somewhat larger scale than the majority of his recordings--Chopin's BALLADE, G MINOR, OP. 23 and the ANDANTE SPIANATO AND POLONAISE, OP. 22. Both are magnificently played, and the last few pages of the POLONAISE are a model for any pianist. Records such as Moszkowski's CAPRICE ESPAGNOL, Rachmaninoff's PRELUDE G MINOR and many others, will always proclaim Hofmann the superlative artist which he undoubtedly is.

In common with many of the artists of other days, Hofmann habitually preludized and modulated before pieces. Fortunately, these little preludes were also recorded, thus preserving an example of a charming custom now falling into disuse.

HOFMANN DISCOGRAPHY

NOTE: Capitals: C = major keys Lower case: c = minor keys.

G & T 1904

Mendelssohn, JAGDLIED OP. 19 NO. 3	45530
Mendelssohn, SPRING SONG OP. 62 NO. 6	45531
Chopin, POLONAISE IN A OP. 40 NO. 1	45532
Schubert-Liszt, ERL KING	045502

Brunswick 1924-1925

Gluck-Brahms, GAVOTTE; Liszt, WALDESRAUCHEN	15046
Hofmann, NOCTURNE; Rachmaninoff, PRELUDE c# OP. 3 NO. 2	15053
Beethoven-Rubinstein, ALLA TURCA; Chopin, WALTZ c# OP. 64 NO. 2	15057
Chopin, POLONAISE A OP.40 NO.1; Rubinstein, MELODY IN F OP.3 NO.1	15098
Liszt, RAPSODY NO. 2	50023
Scarlatti, PASTORELLE E CAPRICCIO; Wagner-Brassin, MAGIC FIRE SPELL	50035
Chopin, SCHERZO b OP. 20; NOCTURNE F# OP. 15 NO. 2	50044
Chopin-Liszt, MY JOYS; Rachmaninoff, PRELUDE g OP. 23 NO. 5	50045

Columbia 1920-1924

Serial #	Europe	U.S.A.	Re#
19847 Mendelssohn, SPRING SONG OP. 62 NO. 6	D1361	A1178	
19848 Schumann, WARUM? OP. 12 NO. 3	D1361	A1178	
30747 Rachmaninoff, PRELUDE c# OP. 3 NO. 2		A5302	
30749 Chopin, NOCTURNE Eb OP. 9 NO. 2	L1089		
30750 Schubert-Tausig, MARCH MILITAIRE		A5302	
30999 Rubinstein, VALSE CAPRICE Eb	L1089	A5419	
36357 Chopin, WALTZ e OP. POST.	L1082	A5443	
36358 Liszt, LIEBESTRAUME NO. 3 Ap	L1082	A5443	
36359 Chopin, POLONAISE A OP. 40 NO. 1	L1092	A5419	
37445 Sternberg, ETUDE c	L1394	A5755	
37467 Rachmaninoff, PRELUDE g OP. 23 NO. 5	L1416	A5755	
47134 Grieg, BUTTERFLY OP. 43 NO. 1		A2434	
47135 Mendelssohn, SPINNING SONG OP. 67 NO. 4		A2434	
48945 Schubert-Liszt, ERL KING	L1416	A5942	8911-M
48948 Moszkowski, CAPRICCIO ESPAGNOL OP. 37		A5942	8911-M
48949 Grieg, BUTTERFLY OP. 43 NO. 1			
Mendelssohn, SPINNING SONG OP. 67 NO. 4		A6211	7004-M
48975 Paderewski, MINUET OP. 14 NO. 1	L1391	A5915	8900-M
48976 Liszt, VENEZIA E NAPOLI	L1394	A5915	7024-M
49306 Chopin, VALSE Ab OP. 34 NO. 1	L1302	A6045	7079-M
49307 Mendelssohn, HUNTING SONG OP. 19, NO. 3			
Moszkowski, LA JONGLEUSE OP. 52 NO. 4	L1393	A6045	7079-M
49309 Mendelssohn, RONDO CAPRICCIOSO OP. 14	L1391	A6078	8900-M
49326 Chopin, FANTASIE IMPROMPTU OP. 66		A6174	7004-M
49327 Chopin, BERCEUSE Db OP. 57	L1392	A6078	
49328 Chopin-Liszt, MAIDEN'S WISH (CHANTS POLONAIS)		A6211	7005-M
49363 Liszt, WALDESRAUCHEN		A6174	
49619 Parker, VALSE GRACILE; Dillon, BIRDS AT DAWN	L1393	A6125	
49620 Rachmaninoff, PRELUDE c# OP. 3 NO. 2	L1092	A6125	7005-M

Columbia 1955

Chopin, WALTZ Db OP.64 NO.1; BALLADE g OP.23; BERCEUSE Db OP.57; ANDANTE SPIANATO AND POLONAISE Eb OP.22; ETUDE Gb OP.25 NO.9; NOCTURNE Eb OP. 9 NO. 2

Rachmaninoff, PRELUDE g OP. 23 NO. 5

Mendelssohn, SPINNING SONG OP. 67 NO. 4

Beethoven-Rubinstein, ALLA TURCA

Moszkowski, CAPRICCIO ESPAGNOL OP. 37

12" LP ML 4929

There are two versions of the above record, one of which contains the pieces listed above, and a second version which contains the following additional titles:

Chopin, NOCTURNE F# OP. 15 NO. 2; WALTZ Ab OP. 42

Concerto

Mendelssohn, SCHERZO e OP. 16 NO. 2

12" LP 1001

Transfer from piano roll, and included in a composite record with other pianists. Titled: A TREASURY OF IMMORTAL PIANISTS.

Notes on Discography

This discography is based on record material from my own collection with the exception of three 10" G&T's listed, copies of which I have not yet found. There may be further G&T's and possibly cylinders, but no definite information is available to date.

When the Columbia records were re-numbered the couplings were mixed, and it has been found convenient to list them by serial number (The serial numbers are within brackets on the label)

The Schubert-Tausig MARCH MILITAIRE was issued with the Columbia flag label (A5302) and the Columbia Rena label (258), with the same serial number in each case, although a different matrix was used. Both records are necessary if a complete collection is desired.

At least two of Hofmann's records were issued with the 'DeLuxe' red label, and numbered respectively--D17714 (L1089) and D17718 (L1092).

The lists are confined to records issued for general sale. It is known that recordings have been made from broadcast performances, but these have not been made available so far.

MAKING RECORDS LIVE THROUGH TAPE RECORDING

MAX KAPLAN

I have often wondered whether many of the people who collect records today have seen the relationship between the phonograph and tape recorder and their interdependence in usage. There are many aspects of this usage and I shall try to note some of them. First, for the collector of old cylinders and conventional records: so many of our older records can't stand too many playings, as this would probably make a "bad condition" situation worse. Why not put these irreplaceable cylinders and discs on tape, and have a permanent record of them? When one wishes to play them for the visitor or interested party, the tape can be played, and the originals spared further wear. It is quite true that the real discophile enjoys a record when played originally, yet, many of us in trying to show the man next door, or members of the family that we are not as cracked as some of our records, could play a tape of them, and achieve our aim as label, artist, etc. are not the primary interest. With many of the rare personality records, especially the Nation's Forum series, I find that the voices of Eamon De Valera, Samuel Gompers, etc. are the principal point of interest, not the records themselves.

The Library of Congress by their re-copying of most of their material carries out this principle quite fully, down to your own library making microfilms of their older newspapers to save the originals from damage by handling. This principle can of course be limited to those discs that require this medium of reproduction. Another wonderful use for tape recording in the field of record collecting, is the actual mapping out of the career of a particular artist, for example Al Jolson. This is an opportunity to really put your Jolson discography to use--namely by starting off on tape with a commentary on the Jolson life up to his first record and proceeding through as many of his records as one chooses, sprinkling anecdotes of Jolsonia throughout. This would surely bring a collection of records of any artist to bright, and illustrative light. With living artists one may intersperse radio and television excerpts for a more vivid portrayal of the artist involved. This idea can be carried out in so many ways, even, if one is so fortunate, as placing a telephone conversation with the artist on tape and in the tape recording.

One word of caution however: all of this if done for one's own pleasure or that within one's home is legal. Reproduction publicly or for payment is specifically forbidden by law. I recall very well one of my own experiences in this connection. In 1940 I made a series of disc recordings of

CYLINDER AND DISC RECORDS, ALL MAKES AND SIZES

My large list of hundreds of cylinders and disc records will be ready for

MAILING OCTOBER 15, 1956

This is a combination of my regular Oct. 1956 and Jan. 1957 lists

Most anything you wish can be found in this large list

Either list will sell for 50¢ prepaid and this 50¢ is refundable with your first order for records or anything else that I sell.

In addition to records we have Complete old model Disc and Cylinder Phonographs, Horns, Winding handles, Horn Stands, Springs and other parts, Magnetic Pickups for Cylinder Phonographs, Stylus and Sapphire Points, for Cylinder Phonographs, Reproducers, Books or Catalogs on Records, Columbia Grand Phonograph and 5" records for same, Special Old Time Presidential and records by Sophie Tucker, Two Black Crows and many other collectors records, Reproducto Pipe Organ, Hand Roller Organs and many other items too numerous to mention.

WANTED TO BUY AT ONCE. State condition and name your price.
Berliner, Bell & Tainter and other real old Phonographs.
Any type of Coin in Slot Cylinder Phonograph.
Paper Rolls for Arno Music Box 9 3/4" wide.
Edison Balmoral and Idelia Phonographs.

A. NUGENT, JR. 12 NORTH THIRD STREET, RICHMOND 19, VIRGINIA

(Making records live continued)

interviews with celebrities taken from the radio on a local station, then later had the artist autograph the record personally. All went well until one day when the late Bill "Bojangles" Robinson was so involved, he hesitated before signing the record, then said, "Do you know this is against the law?" I asked, "Why?" "Because, the studio I'm under contract to, does not allow me to make records, and if I signed this it would mean I'd endorse it." However he did sign the record for me and added, "Don't play this publicly; it's just for your use."

However, one can by means of these, "This is Your Life", tapes work up lots of interest in our hobby, and let people know that there is so much more to record collecting than records in albums alone or stacked away in corners. I know one Crosby collector who made up these special tapes consistently and became so carried away he used to bring his tape recorder to the movies to capture bits of soundtrack.

In a similar vein, it is possible to trace styles of every type of music; for example, the military bands of the turn of the century through the bands of today. In this particular case, poor recording reproduction notwithstanding, it is easy to see how the military bands of today do not compare technically with the bands of yesteryear, which is easily explained by lack of interest in military music today.

These are just a few variations on the idea of documental tape recording, the sky being the limit on ideas that one can use in such ventures. With the use of Mylar, double-play and other types it is possible to get more and more on tape...up to four hours of material can be placed on one reel. So for record collectors looking for a new twist to their hobby, why not try this sort of production, it will enable one to become a script writer, producer, director and announcer all at one time on what is probably one of their favorite topics.

One of the old-time popular recording artists who fascinates me but about whom I know too little is the seductive-voiced comedienne, Elida Morris. I have been told she was a Southern girl and Billy Murray described her to me as being dark, petite, vivacious and extremely attractive. She was a favorite in American vaudeville for a good many years and is said to have been equally popular in English music halls. The National Association of Variety Artists has her listed in its files as dead, but has not been able to give me any further information.

Regardless of this obscurity, which I hope to remove sooner or later, Elida Morris to me had more "sex appeal" than any other women who has ever recorded, and makes the present-day Patti Pages, Doris Days and Kay Starrs sound like feminine icebergs. There was a certain warmth of personality in her recorded work which is indescribable.

Elida Morris' first record may have been Columbia A826, on which she sang YOU'LL COME BACK, coupled with a ragtime classic, TEMPTATION RAG, superbly rendered by Arthur Collins. This double-faced Columbia disc came out in June, 1910. The monthly supplement referred to the Morris side as "a coon song of decided originality and interest, rendered by a new singer whose remarkable talent for this kind of work raises her interpretation to the plane of high art....We venture to say that style such as hers in the singing of the present day coon songs has never before been recorded.

Two months later the Victor supplement contained Miss Morris' photograph and a listing of "The First Morris-Murray Record," No. 5782, ANGEL EYES. This was single-faced and cost 60 cents as compared to the 65 cent price for the double-faced Columbia. The supplement said: "An interesting August novelty is the first of a series of duets by a new Victor combination. It is easy to see why Miss Morris is such a success in vaudeville when we listen to her sing this little darky song. She pictures the lazy, drawling Southern darky to perfection. The new Victor singer is well supported by Mr. Murray, whose facility of adapting himself to any kind of song is well-known."

In November, five months behind Columbia, Victor issued YOU'LL COME BACK, again with Murray assisting Morris. (The song had also been issued as a Morris solo on an Indestructible cylinder, for which Columbia served as sales agent.) The Victor YOU'LL COME BACK was 16683. On the reverse side was a Golden and Hughes comic speciality, J'ININ THE CHURCH.

Of about the same period were two of the most alluringly "sexy" of Elida Morris' Victor records, an early Irving Berlin song, STOP! STOP! STOP! (Come Over and Love Me Some More) (16687, doubled with Nat Willis' SONG OF THE ENGLISH CHAPPIE) and 16807, KISS ME, MY HONEY, KISS ME (written by Berlin and Ted Snyder) and coupled with a George M. Cohan number, THE BELLE OF THE BARBERS' BALL, irresistably sung by Ada Jones and Billy Murray. Elida also sang these two compositions for Columbia and Indestructible. To my ears they represent the apotheosis of her allure.

For several years afterwards, as her cross-country vaudeville engagements permitted, Miss Morris sang for both Victor and Columbia, but she made no Victor records after the end of 1913. She continued, however, to sing for Columbia during the next two or three years, as well as make Indestructible cylinders. These included one or two duets with Walter van Brunt.

I doubt that Elida made any records after 1916, but she was represented that year with two Pathes, which are hard to find, One, 20081, coupled her rendition of FLORA BELLA with YOU'RE THE GIRL, a duet by Roselle Martin and Gordon MacHughes. She also teamed up on 20088 with the imitable and virtually inevitable Henry Burr, to sing Sigmund Romberg's, BACHELOR GIRL AND BOY, doubled with an English importation, HELLO, LITTLE MISS U.S.A., by the versatile comedian, Jack Charman.

Perhaps the rarest Morris record is *one* which a California collector

If record collecting is all serious business with you---and they tell me there are such collectors---better give this effort a miss, because it is concerned primarily with matters of desperate unimportance. It drags up the oddities that turn up in the best regulated of record companies; the curious and laughable, the fumbles and fluffs.

Cal Stewart doing a LAUGHING SONG may not be a rarity, but I have a copy which I suppose is different than anyone else's. It's a 7" Berliner, and was recorded March 30, 1899. It's so scratched in the durium. However aside from this, there is (I suppose) Cal's autograph. Underneath there are some tiny marks which might be overlooked by the casual observer. They are, as the magnifier shows, made with the same point as Stewart's name, and have this startling sentiment - "oh oh oh." Then follows a tiny crude head-and-necktie portrait, captioned "Josh." There is also scratched, H-11 Number of this Berliner is 046, and on playing it turns out to be I'M OLD BUT I'M AWFULLY TOUGH. This disc turned up in a New York farmhouse--along with the Berliner Gramophone machine, which I now happily own.

Who among you has a recording of anything from THE BOHEMIAN GIRL except the two familiar ones? Well, the other day I obtained Victor 17383 whereon Reed Miller sings THE FAIR LAND OF POLAND from Act 3. This disc appears in the 1914 catalog, but was out by 1916. True, a bit of this tenor solo appears on Gems. 17383 has on the reverse Wilfred Glenn doing the SONG OF THE TURNKEY, from deKoven's ROB ROY, and this isn't common, either.

If you like ragtime, don't overlook Victor 17092, which features some remarkable drumming by James I. Lent, who wrote the deal, called THE RAG-TIME DRUMMER. Pryor's band furnishes the background.

Canon Drummond, dean of British collectors, writes me that in 1939 he took his copy of Caruso's DAI CAMPI DAI PATRI (matrix 1789) to play it for Fred Gaisberg at the Hayes plant in Middlesex. (This disc has the famous false start.) Mr. Gaisberg listened a few moments, and then asked to have the publishing department called to find out the key of that number from MEFISTOFELE. When the information came, he said, "I thought so: this machine is running five revolutions too slow." He was interested in finding out how much that disc had cost Canon Drummond. He had recorded it in Milan 37 years before, and his handwriting appeared on it.

The Talking Machine News of 1904 gives us a name that has always intrigued me--Mr. Jellings Blow, now manager of a phonograph company, and an important figure in the business.

Mrs. Ethel Yarborough, eldest daughters of Len Spencer, tells me that the only record in which the voice of her sister Myrtle appears is in THE ENTRANCE OF TOPSY, the scene from UNCLE TOM'S CABIN. Ada Jones is Topsy, and Myrtle Spencer is Little Eva.

The K being next to the L on the typewriter, it was no surprise to me to find I had listed on my filing card for John McCormack's famous solo, SOMEWHERE A VOICE IS CACKLING.

(Elida Morris continued)

told me years ago he had in his collection, a Rex sapphire record on which she sings a number whose name I can't recollect, with Bob Roberts as her partner. This is the only Roberts duet I can recall, off-hand, in which he sang with a woman.

There is some question as to the register of Miss Morris' voice. Columbia called her a contralto, but to me she sounds more like a mezzo-soprano. Whatever her tonal quality was, it was unlike any other singer I have heard. She sang essentially a cheap type of music but did it so well that, as the Columbia writer said she lifted it to a higher plane. I hope some day to know more about Elida Morris.

The guitar is today re-nascent. And this is passing strange for the instrument has been with us since late medieval times. The earliest authentic evidence we have of a true guitar is a representation of one on the Gate of Glory of the church of Santiago de Compostella in Spain erected in 1188 A.D. Most probably the Moors brought it from North Africa a century before that date and it has been with us, in somewhat modified form since, having outlasted all its instrumental rivals. It continues to be an enormously popular instrument. Only thirty years ago it ousted the banjo from a seemingly secure place in the jazz band--its latest triumph. One sees it in the display windows of every music shop and one hears it on a wide variety of radio and television programs. One of its devotees inhabits every city block and no hamlet is so small that it does not boast a home-grown virtuoso. It is an integral part of the horse opera and a necessary accompaniment to the rustic caper. Berlioz played upon it and Rossini wrote for it in his 'Barber of Seville'. Gaudily attired cowboys strum it to the clinking of beer glasses in ten thousand taverns and hill-billy bands carry it to rustic fiestas. A Chinese guitarist would be no phenomenon and a few battered instruments have found their way into the hands of the Bantus and Zulus. Everybody in Hispaniola owns one, save a handful of benighted Jivaros who live in the densest part of the Brazilian Matto Grosso where they do not even have television.

No, I do not think anyone engaged in the manufacture of the ubiquitous guitar has ever gone broke. Yet, the guitar is re-nascent.

In the days of my nonage, attired in long cotton stockings and knee-pants, I attended many a vaudeville performance whereat wandering minstrels of various persuasions displayed their arts. I heard mandolinists, a now vanished tribe, in fancy solo renderings. I heard incredible banjo virtuosi ply their trade behind the footlights. There were soloists on cowbells, musical saws, window shades, etc., etc. And there were whistlers.... But if a guitarist came before the public, he either sang to his own accompaniment or provided the rhythm for a dancer-partner. The guitar was incidental---an adjunct to larynx and leg. It was in effect a vastly cheaper portable piano capable of producing simple harmonies and rhythms for purposes of accompaniment only.

This condition and the limited concept of guitar playing that it induced gave rise to the hordes of 'rasqueado' players (strummers) that I have mentioned---virtuosi whose primitive technique rarely allowed them to stray beyond the most common chords and 'easy' keys---C,D,G,A,F, major and their relative minors. I have known them to fret for weeks at the appearance of a ninth chord in a score. I have known them to faint dead away at coming upon a short chorus in D-flat.

But in the past quarter century the guitar has come into its own. It is a recognized solo instrument. Its players are developing; its literature growing, as serious composers begin to write for it again. It is re-nascent.

The change was wrought by a few guitarists who crossed the Pyrenees from Spain, the ancient home of the instrument into greater Europe, and who braved the Atlantic to come to our shores. They were masters of the 'punteado' technique, in which the guitar is plucked, the fingers of the right-hand being trained to that maximum independence which makes possible melodic playing. The left-hand technique is enormously developed too; but it is the right hand that particularly distinguishes the 'punteado' from the 'rasqueado' method of playing.

All the foregoing is a rather long-----but I hope not uninteresting preamble to some observations on Montilla, FM 57 which features the magnificent playing of Mario Escudero, and Montilla FM-LD 10 which displays the super - virtuosity of Carlos Montoya.

No real criticism of these discs is possible. I do not have other ex-

amples of the compositions for comparison; but I will go out on a safe limb and say that neither of these men would suffer if I did. Montoya is certainly the most brilliant guitar virtuoso that I have ever heard. His playing is sheer bravura with a grand sweep and massive effect: steep chords alternating with such brilliant passage work as I had not deemed possible on the instrument. His style if applied to the piano would surely be called 'Lisztian'. But he is not only a superb technician. His playing is informed by a fiery intensity that I have not heard elsewhere in the guitar world and which seems unsurpassable. On some pieces he is accompanied by Trianita Montoya who does skillful work with castanets.

And there are no holes in Escudero's technique. One might say of Montoya that his blood is always aboil, of Escudero that he laughs. This seems to me to describe a kind of temperamental difference apparent in their playing. It does not mean, however, that Montoya never laughs or that Escudero fails to generate heat. There is ample evidence to the contrary on the records.

No detailed description of the music is possible or necessary here. It is all very, very Spanish: it "embodies and expresses the soul of Spain," as Antonio Gonzales de la Pena, the writer of the jacket-notes puts it, and Senor Gonzales' apellido is something of a guarantee. I must point out the lovely BRISAS DEL GENIL on the Escudero disc, which might suggest some ideas to potential composers for the instrument. And that some of the Escudero renderings are accompanied by castanets, tambourines (?) and liberally surcharged with "Ole's" and other exclamations which I wot not, but which provide authentic atmosphere.

In passing, I'd like to note, re my preamble, that Montoya was first heard in the U. S. as an accompanist to the late 'La Argentina', Spanish danseuse and that Escudero made his first appearances outside of Spain playing to the prancing of Vincente of the same surname. Montoya has since given many solo recitals and if Escudero has not yet, he most certainly will.

The Guitar can go it alone.

Cantares de Espana: Lily Berchman (Dolores Perez Cayuela) Montilla FM28

A U.P. release dated Oct., 8 (1956) Vercelli, Italy notes that over five-hundred singers, dancers and pianists arrived in that music center to compete in the seventh international Giovan Batista Viotti contest. The brief notice had interest and meaning for me, because it was at this same competition three years ago that Lily Berchman sang and conquered. "A week later, she also received the extraordinary first prize for oration from the Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramatico of Madrid!" I think these are facts worth mentioning. You will find more of biographical interest on the back of the folder of CANTARES. Senorita (?) Berchman comes to us well recommended.

La Berchman impressed me tremendously. So much so, in fact, that I hesitated to put into writing exactly what I thought. I had not quite the courage of my convictions. I was mulling over my problem (I had already written the previous paragraphs) when I heard a knock upon the door and rose to admit an impromptu but ever-welcome visitor who is keenly interested in the voice, sings himself, is writing an opera and is one of the most acutely musical beings it is my pleasure to know. "Bill," Isaac, "I have a vocal release that I'd like you to hear. May I--?" --easing Lily's disc out of the folder.

'By all means, play it' he replied. I set the record spinning while he listened with that quiet intentness that I have come to know denotes a keen interest in the matter under consideration. I hoped inwardly that he would agree with me substantially--even tho' it would remove the possibility of a highly enjoyable argument. I played side two at his request and without comment from either of us on anything that had preceded. After it

had finished playing he asked me to repeat a band or so (there are four songs on each side) and I did. Then, to him: "Well----?"

"I think her voice is more inherently dramatic than Callas'," he said. "She reminds me of Supervia without the objectionable qualities of Supervia's voice. I think she would be an excellent Carmen. I am looking forward to her next record." This is extraordinarily high praise and I lodged a faint demurrer. Now I shall go on to tell you about that voice.

Berchman is NOT a lyric soprano: she is a dramatic soprano of the first order, with mezzo qualities that enhance the beauty of her voice and endow her singing with a vocal *chiaroscuro* that I have seldom heard elsewhere and which involves a nice control of dynamics. Her scale is smooth from bottom to top and changes in registration are effected without breaks. The lowest register has a timbre that suggests the english horn----that beautiful alto oboe----and from there on up to the top the tones retain the fullness of the best register of the clarinet. It is live, warm and big but escapes the heaviness that we so often associate with her type of voice.

She sings with, perhaps, a shade too much vibrato; but it is not at anytime annoying. I notice it because it is my business to notice such things; and, in any case, I think it is a component part of her voice and not an artificial superimposition.

She copes successfully, if not with the incredible virtuosa ease of a Supervia, with the *colortura* that she encounters in the CANTARES.

Does she flat very occasionally? Small matter when the sum of her excellences is considered. Singers with gaudier reputations than Berchman's do so regularly and with impunity and it is so seldom an offense in her case that I record it here only so my customers may know that I did hear and have discounted it.

I have not been able to compare directly the Berchman interpretations with others. The Turina pieces have been done before, but I believe the other songs are first recordings.

To sum up: we have a disciplined voice of great warmth and beauty used with rare intelligence by a mature artist. For me the combination of factors puts her in the front rank of contemporary singers. It is to be hoped that Montilla will wax a disc of operatic arias of her own choosing, pressing her to do only the things she feels she does best. I think that they would take a minimum risk for a maximum gain by releasing her and themselves from confinement to a purely Spanish repertoire.

It would have been brilliant of Montilla to include the poems to the Cantares in Spanish and with sound English translations. Perhaps that is a good deal to expect: never-the-less, it should be expected. The cost to Montilla would be small; the gratitude of the purchaser, enormous.

The recordings, as such, are beyond cavil, the surfaces immaculate. No real problem presents itself in recording the guitar: but Montilla is especially to be congratulated on the fine balance achieved between voice and orchestra on the Berchman disc, and the beautiful, natural sounds of both.

Finally, no one but an ungrateful ass would fail to mention the Chamber Orchestra of Madrid and its conductors (?) Montorio and (?) Navarro who gave Berchman such magnificent support: soloists do not always get it.

URGENTLY WANTED: The following phonograph records;
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This is a continuation of the list that appeared in Vol. 1 No. 3

- 104 Vigneau-Fer: Boheme- Mimi? Son io....(Puccini)
 105
 106
 107
 108 Campagnola-Cesar: Romeo- Ah ne fais pas encore (Gounod) 02151V
 109 " " : " - Ange adorable (Gounod) 02155V
 110 " " : " - Nuit d'hymenee (Gounod)
 111 " " : Manon- N'est ce plus ma main (Massenet) 02163V
 112 " " : " - Et je sais votre nom (Massenet) 02170V
 113 " " : " - Non votre liberte (Massenet) 02171V
 114 " " : " - Tu pleurs (Act V) (Massenet)
 115 Carlyle-Payan: Le Crucifix-
 116 Campagnola-Cerdan: Faust- Mais ce Dieu (Gounod) 02176V
 117 " " : " - A mois des plaisirs (Gounod) 02175½V
 118 Trimont-Heilbronner: Lakme- Duet Act I Pt. 2 (Delibes)
 119 Campagnola-Cesar: Romeo- Ah tu dis vrai (Gounod) 02149V
 120 " " : Manon- Toi vous (Massenet) 02164V
 121 Heilbronner-Vigneau: La Petite Maries- Donnez moi votre main pt.1
 122 ? " " : " " - " " pt. 2 (Lecocq)
 123
 124 Payan: La Juive- Si la rigueur (Halevy)
 125 Brohly-Heilbronner: Mireille- Voici la saison (Gounod) 02219V
 126
 127
 128 Campagnola-Cerdan: Carmen- Je suis Escamillo (Bizet) 02243V
 129 Heilbronner-Brohly: Butterfly- Flower Duet (Puccini)
 130 Trimont-Payan: Robert le Diable- Ah l'honnête homme (Meyerbeer)
 131 Campagnola-Brohly: Carmen- Je vois danser en votre honneur 02382V
 132 " " : " - C'est toi, c'est moi (Bizet) 02390V
 133 Beyle-Heilbronner: Aphrodite- Je suis la rose de Saron (Erlanger)
 134 ? " " : " - " " " " pt. 2
 135 Brohly-Beyle: Tosca- Clemence etrange (Puccini)
 136 Brohly-Campagnola: Carmen- Non, non Carmen (Bizet) 02389½V
 137
 138 Tirmont-Payan: Robert le Diable- Le bon heur est dans..(Meyerbeer)
 139 Campagnola-Cesar: Romeo- O nuit divine (Gounod) 02150V
 140
 141 Campagnola-Brohly: Carmen- Non tu ne m'aimes pas (Bizet) 02482V
 142 " " : Cavalleria R.- Tu qui Santuzza(Mascagni)02489V
 143 Cesar-Depouy: Noces de Jeanette- Halte la s'il vous plait (Massenet)
 144 " " : " - Ah jarnique (Massenet)
 145 Beyle-Heilbronner: Butterfly- Love Duet Pt. 1 (Puccini)
 146 " " : " - " " Pt. 2 (Puccini)
 147
 148 Campagnola- ? : Faust- Laisse moi contempler Pt.1 (Gounod)
 149 Campagnola-Brohly: Cavalleria R.- No, no Turridu(Mascagni) 02511V
 150
 151 Campagnola-Cesar: Romeo- Nuit d'hymenee (Gounod) 02512V
 152 " " : Faust- Oui c'est toi j'aims (Gounod) 02525V
 153 " " : " - Divine purete (Gounod) 02506V
 154
 155 Campagnola-Cesar: Romeo- Ou suis-je (Gounod)
 156 " " : " - Console toi pauvre ame (Gounod)
 157
 158 Matzenauer-Amato: Carmen- Si tu m'aimes (Bizet)
 159 Campagnola-Cesar: Lakme- Lakme c'est toi (Delibes)
 160 " " : " - C'est l'amour endormie (Delibes)

(The 034000 series continued)

- 161
162
163 Chorus: Carmen- Sur la place (Bizet)
164
165
166 Dupre-Vigneau: Traviata- Vous etes Violetta (Verdi)
167 " " : " - Ah de mes larmes (Verdi)
168
169 Brohly-Payan: Cendrillon- Nous quitterons cette ville (Massenet)
170 ? LaFargue-Maguenot: Poupee de Nuremberg- Pour le vals (Adam)
171 " " : Si j'etais Roi- Du tendre oiseau (Adam)
172 Dupre-Vigneau: Rigoletto- Si vendetta (Verdi)
173
174
175 (Offenbach)
176 Heilbronner-Beyle: Tales of Hoffman- C'est un chanson d'amour 02608 $\frac{1}{2}$ V
177 Campagnola-LaFargue: Werther- Oui, c'est moi (Massenet) 02571V
178 " " : " - N'achevez pas helas (Massenet) 02572V
179 Beyle-LaFargue: L'Africaine- En vain leur rege impuissante (Meyerbeer)
180 " " : " - Combien tu m'es chere (Meyerbeer)
181 " " : " - Jamais nulle mortelle (Meyerbeer)
182 " " : " - O ma Seliha (Meyerbeer)
183 Gresse-LaFargue: Huguenots- Dans la nuit tou'te seul Pt.1 (Meyerbeer)
184 " " : " " " " " Pt.2 (Meyerbeer)
185 Beyle-Brohly: Carmen- Seguidilla (Bizet)
186
187 Clement-Farrar: Romeo- Ange adorable (Gounod)
188
189
190
191
192
193 de Creus-Elain: Barbriere di S.- Numero Quindici (Rossini)
194 Beyle-Charbonnel: Travatore- Mere tu durs (Verdi)
195 Du Treix-Charbonnel: Samson et D.- C'est toi mon bien aime (St.Saens)
196
197
198 (St.Saens)
199 Du Treix-Charbonnel: Samson et D.- Ainsi qu'on vois des bles 02891V
200 " " : " " " - Dalila que veux tu (St.Saens) 02892V

Appended are other titles of this series of which the numbers are doubtful or unknown.

- Beyle-Brohly: Tosca- Amaro sol per te (Puccini)
" " : Cavalleria R.- O mon Turiddu (Mascagni)
Beyle-ensemble: Boheme- Act 2 or 4 ? (Puccini)
Beyle-LaFargue: Cid- O jours de ma.... (Massenet)
Beyle-Charbonnel: Travatore- Oui la fatigue (Verdi)
Campagnola-Cesar-Payan: Faust- Le jour va lui (Gounod)
" " : " - Anges purs (Gounod)
Campagnola-Cesar: Manon- Ah j'ai bonne memoire (Massenet)
Campagnola- ? : Faust- Nuit d'amour (Gounod)
de Creus-Martelle: Chocolate Soldier- Duet (O. Strauss)
Carlyle-Brohly: Stabat Mater- Quis est homo (Rossini)
Tirmont-Heilbronner: Lakme- C'est l'amour endormie (Delibes)
Tirmont-Martyl: Mireille- O Magali (Gounod)
Beyle-Vigneau: Richard Coeur de Lion- Une fleur brulante (Gretry)
Du Treix-Charbonnel: Samson- Qui importe a mon coeur
de Creus- ? : Barbriere di S. All'idea digoel... (Rossini)

- B 1 Knote: Lohengrin- Hoechstes Vertrau'n
 B 2 Dippel: Martha- Ach, so fromm
 B 3 Resky: Traviata- Di provenza
 B 4 Constantino: Rigoletto- La donna e mobile
 B 5 Scotti: Sonnambula- Vi ravviso
 B 6 Resky: Gioconda- Suicidio
 B 7 Berti: Pagliacci- Arioso
 B 8 Resky: Favorita- Duet
 B 9 Van Rooy: Tannhauser- O kehr zuruck
 B 10 Van Rooy: Carmen- Chanson du Toreador
 B 11 Constantino: Barbieri di Siviglia- Ecco ridente
 B 12 " : Aida- Celeste Aida
 B 13 Knote: Die Meistersinger- Preislied
 B 14 Resky: Traviata- Duet
 B 15 Dippel: Die Hugenotten- Romanza
 B 16 Resky: Preghiera (Tosti)
 B 17 Berti: Cavalleria Rusticana- Siciliana
 B 18 " : Rigoletto- Questa o quella
 B 19 Van Rooy: Tannhauser- O du mein holder abendstern
 B 20 Rappold: Maria- Ave Maria
 B 21 Scotti: Pagliacci- Prologo
 B 22 Knote: Die Meistersinger- Fanget an
 B 23 Abott: Faust- Air des bijoux
 B 24 Dippel: Koenigin von Saba- Erzählung
 B 25 Burgstaller: Don Giovanni- Ein Band der Freundschaft
 B 26 Berti: Tosca- E lucevan le stelle
 B 27 Resky: Los ojos negros (Alvarez)
 B 28 Jacoby: Gli Ugonotti- Aria del Paggio
 B 29 Van Rooy: Fliegende Hollaender- Wie oft in Meeres
 B 30 Constantino: Martha- M'appari
 B 31 Burgstaller: Der Freischultz- Durch die Waeider
 B 32 Scotti: Aida- Sortita d'Amonasro
 B 33 Rappold: Lohengrin- Balkon Scene (Tuch luften)
 B 34 Berti: Trovatore- Deserto sulla terra
 B 35 Resky: El mar sin playas (Sancedo)
 B 36 Dippel: Lohengrin- Lohengrin's Abschied
 B 37 Abott: Rigoletto- Aria di Gilda
 B 38 Knote: Die Walkuere- Siegmund's liebeslied
 B 39 Jacoby: Romeo et Juliette- Air de Stephano
 B 40 Constantino: Traviata- Dei miei bollenti spiriti
 B 41 Ancona: Gli Ugonotti- Nobil dama
 B 42 Constantino: Manon Lescaut- Guardate pazzo son io
 B 43 Rappold: Tannhauser- Gebet
 B 44 Scotti: Don Pasquale- Belle siccome un angelo
 B 45 Burgstaller: Fliegende Hollaender- Willst jenes Tag's
 B 46 Campanari: Tarantella (Rossini)
 B 47 Jacoby: Faust- Air des fleurs
 B 48 Blass: Zauberfloete- In diesen heil'gen Hallen
 B 49 Constantino: L'Africaine- O Paraciso
 B 50 Ancona: Favorita- A tanto amor

*To be continued
in the next issue*

(034000 Vocal ensembles continued)

Dupre-Vigneau: Rigoletto- Tutti la feste (Verdi)
 Brohly-Maruotot: Therese- Duo de la Fontaine (Massenet)

The following data is to be incorporated in the first listing of this series that appeared in PHONOGRAPHICA Vol. 1 No. 3: Enter after 034014 VR, 015 VR, 035 Matrix No. 0347V, 037 # 0348V, 050 # 01274V, 036 # 01548V

On the Fourth of July, fifty six years ago, one of the most significant incidents in the evolution of jazz took place quite unheralded in the city of New Orleans, La. It was the birthday of an American negro, Louis Armstrong, who was destined to find his way into the hearts of jazz devotees thru-out the world.

Today his name is legend-and his music is undoubtedly the most inspiring contribution to the current jazz scene. His personal appearances are sure sell-outs. His followers are devout and loyal, with no limitations as to race, color, or creed. This is as it should be. For Louis speaks the international language----music.

Probably no one other musician has ever played before so many different audiences with such a significantly common result----complete acceptance and appreciation. These facts you may already be aware of----you may have read them from time to time in books, magazines, or you may have heard the same on radio or TV.

But there is another side to Louis Armstrong that few people ever get to see or realize, for few people get the opportunity to meet him and make his close friendship. Fortunately, Louis' friendship has been my greatest treasure and pleasure and it has helped me greatly to understand partially this man who is so widely celebrated, yet so humble and honest with those who have the privilege of his friendship.

I was with Louis recently, on July 7th and 8th, when he played, along with his great all-star unit, at two engagements in the vicinity of Reading, Pa. I spent the greater part of the time behind the stages and in the hotel with him and was again impressed by his complete humility---his refusal to consider himself as anything else than a man with a desire to play music----Jazz----the great love of his life, and to please those who honor him with their following.

It had been almost a year since Louis and I had met, yet the second we were face to face in his hotel room, his eyes sparkled with recognition: "Acker, my boy, great to see you again," His memory for those who come in close contact with him is amazing, and most heart warming.

But whether one has a chance to know him well or only from appearances on stage, all agree his face radiates a warmth and expression of true congeniality that has never been surpassed.

Perhaps this accounts for the amazing turn-out of nearly 2000 people at Sunnysbrook Ballroom, near Pottstown, Pa., on a humid and hot July Saturday night, when ordinarily the first thoughts of all persons is to get away from crowds, and "beat the heat." But there they were--packed in and awed, by the great trumpet and by the band; but I believe above all, by the personality of the man himself. I watched all evening from backstage; watched the intent expressions on the faces of the rapt audience. Few chose to dance; they preferred to watch and listen.

Louis, known for years for his constant generosity, exhibited this quality at intermission time this particular evening. It was extremely warm backstage and Louis asked if I would swing open the door for a few minutes for a breath of air. I did so and walked back to Louis' dressing room. I sat there with him for a short while when, suddenly, we heard a slight disturbance near the stage door. Out of curiosity Louis and I shoved our heads around the dressing room doorway to see what was going on. There near the stage door an elderly negro had stepped in to ask if he could get an autograph from Louis. The officer, nearby, who was expected to perform his duty in dispelling intruders, was politely ushering the gentleman out. Immediately Louis grabbed his pen and autographed a slip of paper which he passed on to the elderly enthusiast. Louis asked him how he had liked the show thus far. The old man, very reluctantly and a little shamefacedly, replied that he hadn't had money enough to meet the admission price. Then Louis just froze for a second or two and asked,

(Louis Armstrong continued)

"Pops, you really dig this jazz?" The answer was in the affirmative. Louis then grabbed a folding chair standing idle along the wall and said--"OK, Pops, you're in for the night." The old man was elated and almost moved to tears by Armstrong's kindness. He sat quietly and unobtrusively in a corner of the back stage for the remainder of the night, the guest of a guy with a big heart and a winning smile.

I think it was that winning smile the following night that helped to keep a crowd of over 1800 sitting and standing in the intermittent rain at Ephrata, Pa., completely captivated and oblivious to the inclement weather. Many another top-notch musician would have refused to play a "job" outdoors in such weather, but not Louis. As he put it when the light rain first came that night,---"If those cats can stand it, and it don't bother them none, it sure ain't gonna stop me from blowin." And Louis played, and the rains came and went, but no one left the spot. It was as though the Armstrong trumpet had cast a spell over the crowd.

The people who love jazz and Armstrong were loyal to him, and he, as he has always been, was loyal to them. I don't believe Louis has ever been accused of giving a poor or half-hearted show, or playing badly; for he only knows one way to play jazz--with all his heart and soul.

I asked Louis the question that many have asked: the question about his retirement. He has been in the business and at the top of the field since 1925. His answer was typically "Louis Armstrong":

"Pops, this horn and me belong together, I mean--without the horn I'd just be lost, its sure part of me. I ain't got no plans to put it down. No, man, we're partners." And that pretty well sums up the story of Louis Armstrong, a man who lives and loves music, a man who is only happy when he's playing, and a man who will go on playing the sounds he loves as long as jazz fans want him to;----and that's a mighty long, long, time. Louis Armstrong is a very great musician; but more than that, he's a mighty fine man, who has found humility and sincerity to be just as valuable as his musical talents. And that's the way it should be!

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SENSATIONALLY RAGGED

BOB SCHAFFNER

Columbia seems to have its share of trouble with SENSATION RAG.

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Then COPENHAGEN became SENSATION RAG on I Like Jazz (JZ1).

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Jim Walsh wants to buy: Old phonograph record catalogs and supplements (Mostly before 1915) and back copies of phono publications. Please do not send lists of records or phonographs for sale. I do not want the Victor-Victrola Book of Opera. Do not submit material without being instructed as I cannot return or pay for unsolicited items. If I do not reply, I already have the material you offer. JIM WALSH, BOX 476, VINTON, VIRGINIA

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NOTICE: It is with considerable regret that I inform our readers that my friend and colleague, Mr. George M. Meiser, herewith resigns from his official post with PHONOGRAPHIANNA. Lack of time compels him to give up the heavier duties that heretofore were his, but I am happy to say that he will continue to write regularly in PHONOGRAPHIANNA for the pleasure of us all.

At the same time I want to welcome to our staff Mr. Jack Boyer, whose capacity for careful, conscientious work has commended him to me long before this. He will assume some of the rather thankless tasks that formerly fell to Mr. Meiser.

Ed. Lotz, editor

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